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EUROPEAN ~~ASY~~ cinema ®

People ask me all the time what I get out of the Italian genre film. After all, they just jump on the latest trend and run it into the ground. Well, I've thought about it long and hard and can sum it up with the term "ITALIANESQUE" (I know, there ain't no such word!). Damn near every Italian film I've seen (There are exceptions) has a scene that would never occur in an American made effort. My description of this event would be ITALIANESQUE. Below are some examples:

- 1) DJANGO- There's a scene in this western where a scared, rat-like slaveball is chased down and punished for his double dealings. Only in an Italian Western would a guy have his ear cut off and jammed down his throat.
- 2) SLAUGHTER HOTEL- How many insane asylums would contain a variety of ancient instruments of torture situated throughout?
- 3) DR. BUTCHER M.D.- Where else would an outboard motor be used to kill a zombie?
- 4) CRIMES OF THE BLACK CAT- Everyone rips off Hitchcock's shower murder sequence from PSYCHO, but it takes balls to do so and NOT stint on excessive blood and gore. Here you get not only arsey farsey camera angles, but gaping flesh wounds as well.
- 5) BURIAL GROUND- A loving son becomes zombified and removes mom's breast with his teeth.
- 6) ZOMBIE- Frederick Wertham was a doctor who was quite upset with comic books in the 30s for their predilection on "injury to eye" motifs. Viewing this, the good doctor would shit all over his pants.
- 7) RUE MORGUE MASSACRE- Paul Naschy's producers supplied him with a real corpse so he can behead it in all its mondo glory.
- 8) LAS CHICAS DE LAS BRAGAS TRANSPARENTES- In this Franco epic, the heroine reveals herself to be a transsexual and presents her lover with her/his preserved severed penis. The lover sensibly chunks it out the window.
- 9) DJANGO KILL- A violent western that features a scene where a member of an outlaw gang is shot full of bullets made from gold.

His fellow gang members tear him to pieces to get at the gold embedded in his torso.

10)1 KISS THE HAND: Forget Al Pacino's foul mouthed performance in SCARFACE. John Saxon did it here first and so much better in this mini-mafia effort.

And on and on.....

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### Polish Horror Cinema: by Dale Bence

Poland remains an overlooked country as far as cinema is concerned but with recent changes in the government and restrictions, a new era in film seems to promise to come from here. In the meantime, many good films and film people have been shamefully overlooked by the rest of the world, a brief profile on some of them being offered here.

#### Wojciech Piszcza:

A blonde, young actress who could serve as sort of a Polish counterpart to Jamie Foxx, she played a similar role to Foster's Taxi Driver character in *Go Go*, which also dealt with child prostitution. Other credits, again ignored by the western world include *Fored*, *The Sheep*, *The Wolf*, and *Wanting*. Recently she gained exposure through being allowed to shoot a film in Spain for Joseph Lanzot, called *Central Station*, a psychological thriller. Incredibly, she's Poland's top actress.

#### Andrzej Bartoski:

A prominent Polish director, known for weird films, two of which are *Toku* (1988) and *The Haunted* (1981). Again, little seems to be known about his work outside of his native Poland, but with a seeming reopening of Poland's doors, this could change.

#### Leszek Antoniak:

An actor/writer/director who covers the world from all angles in the tradition of Spain's Paul Monchy, he recently wrote and directed a film called *The Touched*, dealing with madness, as the title implies. Other credits, *Freelancer* (1981), *Custody* (1983), and *The Haunted* (1981) are of a far more benign nature. He is a relatively new director however, and presumably has several years of good films in his, still, coming at an opportune time, with Poland joining the rest of the world again.

#### Boleslaw Biniak:

A theater actor who switched to cinema from the stage, Biniak's credits include *Yill* 's, *Gap*, his most violent picture, *Shivers*, *Forer*, and *Blind Chance*. Generally cast as an anarchist, spaced outter, or criminal, he may be Poland's best known psychopath on the screen. Recently made his directorial debut in a film called *The Red*.

A very fine magazine dealing with Polish cinema is *Polish Film*/"W Lubelskiem" \$, box no. 124/ 90-140 Lublin, Poland. Write here for info on information on this ignored country and its film projects. Subscription information may be obtained here and the fee is like \$12.00 per year or somewhere around there.

AN INTERVIEW WITH SALVADOR SAINZ by Manuel Martínez

Salvador Sainz, an actor, screenwriter, newspaper critic, novelist, and overall horror personality from Reus, in northern Spain, is perhaps one of that country's most well known experts in the reels of horror cinema. Here he gives an interesting interview, conducted in his home town.

Q. Salvador, what are present projects you are working on?  
A. I have two, first a book coming out in the winter, dealing with the world of the horror film in Spain and secondly, more important to fans of the horror film, I am working to put together a winter convention for horror film in Reus, with fans, writers, actors, directors, and others from this genre of film being there. If it goes over well, and it should, we will make it an annual event. That is what I am planning on.

Q. What about scriptwriting and other work in the film genre?  
A. I have some things being planned. We'll leave it at that for now.

Q. You have been involved with a feud with Joaquinto Molina, or as he is known in the film trade, Paul Naschy. What caused this feud?  
A. Paul Naschy is my avowed enemy. What he did was inexcusable and unforgivable, as everyone in Spain now knows, for I have made it all public. Naschy/Molina, whichever name you wish to call him by, is nothing but an outright thief. The latest film he supposedly wrote and produced, *The Offspring Of The Devil*, was my idea and my screenplay. He stole it from me, redistributed it under his name, and turned out a film that robbed me of the credit and terms we agreed upon. How on earth this idiot expected to pull it off without getting caught, I cannot figure, nor do I understand why, for a relatively small profit, he chose to rob me, make me his enemy, and commit actions for which he would surely be caught and denounced in public. Right now, the rights and film distribution for this movie are tied up because I have proven it is my work and the image of Paul Naschy has taken a downward plunge to be certain. This isn't the first time either, that Naschy has more or less been a pirate. He has stolen ideas from Marciso Ribot, Asendo De Gomorio, and others. He has taken the characters from the old Americas films and rewritten them for Spanish audiences, without a great deal of originality. Paul Naschy, in truth, lacks imagination. He has made a great deal of films, but how much work is truly his own could be disputed. In the past few years, the man has gotten stranger and stranger. He can't handle the fact his career is slipping and is living in a dream world. The man is my avowed enemy. The reasons why are obvious. The only reason why I haven't taken further action to try to put the man in jail is because of the tremendous court costs and expenses, plus in doing so, other associates of mine would lose money on his account, due to his actions. Everyone now knows the man is a bandit and that's a good start. It has all been a very bad experience.

Q. Is there a big horror film following in Spain?

A. Yes. There is a big audience for the horror film. American horror films have been popular here. In Spain and France there are many cinema magazines, some devoted entirely to horror. For a long time I used to contribute to *Famosos Cronistas Of Filmland In America*, as a Spanish correspondent. The horror film has always been popular here. Of the current crew, Piquer, Bigas Luna, and Jose Villon are the most active of the directors who are working with horror.

Q. Has Spain and the role of film changed over the years?

A. Certainly. In the time of Franco, there was much editing of film. In Franco's era, he wanted films made that glorified himself and the traditional Spain he wanted to identify. It was very hard for artists because there was little room for free expression. You could not produce something in Spain that Franco and his offices would consider immoral or offensive or it would be cut out. When Franco was alive, they didn't even allow Playboy magazine into this country, censorship was that strong. Since his death, however, things have changed completely. The films now have violence, nudity, and whatever else is needed, just like in the United States or other countries, without the fear of censorship. It is a different era now than it was 15 or 20 years ago. Spain has changed. Everyone wants to have democracy now and wants the freedom of expression. When Franco was alive, he was popular with the general audience, but now, looking back, most people no longer like him. Those in artistic professions feel a lot less pressure and have a lot more freedom than they did during his reign.

Q. Going back to Paul Naschy once more. We know what you think of him as a person but what about as an actor? You've got to respect the man. After all, look how many films he's made, some of them quite popular, in the horror realm?

A. Again, I note how Naschy's personality has changed over the past few years and how he has become increasingly hard to deal with. I no longer wish to deal with the man, as he is now, but he was not always this way. The years have changed him. As an actor, however, there are some things not known about him, just like some of his underworld deals as a businessman. For example, he owed his fame to his looks, a tremendously good looking man in his prime, I will not deny, with the looks of a matinee idol. The problem is this is all he had going for him. Most people don't know he has always had trouble projecting his voice. (ed. note: This statement has been made by others familiar with Naschy as well, so there is truth to it). In the films, most of the time they would end up having someone else speaking the dialogue or somehow adjusting it to make amends. He had a low, rumbling voice long ago and still does, one that does not carry at all, which is one of the first things an actor is supposed to learn how to do. Here again, there is not a great deal of respect I hold for the man. Of course I am biased by what was done to me, but what I've said is all true and has been proven. These are not idle statements designed to make Paul Naschy look bad. He has done that on his own.

Q. Do you have any favorite pictures?

A. There are many of them. Star Wars was great (note, he was wearing a Star Wars logo on his shirt). Anguish by Bigas Luna was good. Many of the films by De Ossorio and Piquer have been good. Also films by Iglesias Iguino. I also like the American and British films, but am not a fan of A Nightmare On Elm Street, Halloween, or Friday The 13th because they have made too many sequels and I think each sequel has gotten worse. These people just don't know when to quit. They take good first films in the USA and ruin them with constant sequels, each one worse than the one before, made just to draw in the fans on the premise that because the original was good, the sequels will be. From the USA I'd like to see more originality and less sequels. The parts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and so on are becoming old. Just because one film is good does not mean it needs a sequel. Sequels tend to destroy and not boost the memory of a good picture.

Q: Are there American films you admire in the horror realm?

A: Yes, but particularly the older films, with Karloff, Lugosi, and so on. Back then, with the lack of special effects and advances made later in modern cinema, the actors really needed to know how to act in order to make the films work. Any more, actors are secondary to special effects in most films.

Q: Are there many actors or actresses who have given good performances in Spanish horror, that you admire?

A: Several. For actors and actresses, Diana Conca, Esperanza Roy, Simon Andreu, Lone Fleming, Marga Lina, and Victor Israel are a few. As for directors, Francisco Herrera, Jose Vilos, Bigas Luna, and Amanda De Cicerio are some of the ones who stand out. There are not as many horror movies being made in Spain now, as before, but the horror theme is popular.

Q: Do you think your problems with Paul Naschy will ever be resolved?

A: There are several avenues of action being taken right now and just about everyone in Spain knows now that I was robbed of what was mine, as I have compiled and made known the truth against him. He has been discredited publicly. The man, however, is weak in the head. He even called me on the phone in the midst of the scandal and threatened to kill me. That's the kind of person he is, and now everyone knows it. Paul Naschy is interested only in Paul Naschy and seeing his name in lights. He is, how do you say it, a megalomaniac. His ego controls him. I cannot understand the man or why he did what he did, as it would be obvious to anyone with any intelligence that doing such a thing would not work. How he expected to get away with this is beyond me and he has not gotten away with it?

Q: Do you think the political problems will ever be cleared enough so the film may start being seen?

A: If released under proper credit, it could be a possibility. It is a good film, but it is my writing, not that of Paul Naschy-Jacinto Molina.

#### THE JUNGLE MASTER (1970) FORGE VIDEO

aka KARZAN, IL FAVOLOSO UOMO DELLA GIUNGLA

DIRECTED BY NILES DEER. REVIEWED BY MICHAEL SECULI

Fair warning: It's a sucker for these European Jungle Girl flicks, so this review is gonna be biased. But first, a brief history...

Longtime staple of American adventure/exploitation films, it wasn't until the 1950's that the Europeans finally got into the act. Oddly enough, it was Germany that started things rolling with the LIANE series in 1956, starring Marion Michael as the Jungle Bishop/Goddess. The second film -- LIANE, DIE WEISSE SKLAVIN -- actually saw American release under the immortal title NATURE GIRL AND THE SLAVES. But it should come as a surprise to no one that it took the Italians to turn the tired Jungle Girl genre into an Art Form. Throughout the 1960's, foreign audiences thrived to the exploits of such exotic Fessile-Terran types as GUNGALA (Kitty Swan), LUCANA (Mei Chini), TARZANA (Peele Bennett), SHOGI (Edwige Fenech), EVA (Esmeralda Barros) and doubtless many others. The names may have changed, the plots maybe not; but the *raison d'être* was the same: Jungle Girl films provided a good excuse (not that we really need one) for showing topless girls in loinclothes climbing trees.

In that respect, with only fleeting female nudity (at least in the American version), THE JUNGLE MASTER may be atypical of the rest, but it easily showcases all of the other commonly found ingredients. It's also one of the few titles available on videotape here, so let's see what we're dealing with... The file stars Johnny Kissimmee Jr. as Karzen (No, it's not making this up) who comes complete with his own patented "jungle bowl", and better yet, his lovely wife Sheeran (Simone Blondell). While Karzen is no less believable than the average cut-rate Tarzan, Sheeran wears a bit too much eye makeup and has obviously yet to master the art of drinking from coconut shells. Their capture is the object of a safari consisting of the following characters: Mr. Fox (an homage to Victor?), a throwback to the days when slaughtering endangered species was considered a manly sport; Lord Carter, the properly English financier of the expedition; Monice, the anthropologist/resident female victim; Steve, the photographer; and Creasy (played by "Creasy" Mathews, if you believe the credits), the mute guide, who plays a single monotonous tune on the harmonica throughout most of the picture.

A plot reconstruction is almost pointless since the individual elements hold all the charm. It therefore behoves me to cite a few. For instance, the incredibly poorly-matched wildlife stock footage interest with scenes of our main players resting. The nearest these bozos ever get to an actual living animal (excluding Cheekah, Karzen's pet chimp) is a jeep ride through a herd of domesticated cattle... Or the encounter with a savage tribe whose leader behaves like a live-action equivalent of Bugs Bunny's cannibal adversary in an old Warner Brothers cartoon... And of course, the positively exquisite dubbed dialog (English version courtesy of our old pal Ralph Zucker), of which this is a prime example:

FOX: "This entire area here is heavily populated by water buffalo."

CARTER: "I gathered that."

FOX: "Yes, and they're all over the place as you can see."

It is, however, Creasy who steals the show. It seems he was captured and tortured by a rebel tribe as a child, and this unfortunate event has left him speechless; but it has also given him "a sixth sense for the jungle". With that established, the screenwriter proceeds to sabotage his own mission by having Creasy fall victim to the majority of the perils. While legging behind (I thought he was the *guido*!), he is ambushed by a python; but to be fair, Creasy gets his revenge on the serpent kingdom when he captures and gnares on a small, rubber snake (However, Karzen upstages him by sinking his choppers into a live fish). But Creasy does prove to be indispensable when Monice is attacked by a dangerous wind-up tarantula... He sneaks up on the spider with his trusty blowgun, as Mr. Fox soberly instructs him to "Aim for a nerve center, Creasy". Being well-acquainted with the neurology of arachnids, Creasy's aim is true.

His death scene really taxes the old tear ducts... Creasy catches a spear in the chest; but no sooner has his body hit the ground than Lord Carter plucks the symbolic harmonica from Creasy's pocket. So profoundly sentimental is this scene, that we can almost forgive him for not even bothering to check his friend's pulse.

Despite this handicap, the now-Creasyless safari eventually captures Sheeran, figuring that Karzen will follow them. He does, braving the many terrors of the jungle, such as stock footage of crocodiles and a guy in a really shabby-looking gorilla suit. Karzen frees his wife, only to be captured himself. While the safari members debate over the fate of their captive, the film uses cinematic shorthand via an abrupt jump cut to a weird, slow-motion, Zen ending, which shows Karzen, Sheeran and Cheekah frolicking on the beach (the beach!) while a bad lounge trio plays on the soundtrack. Surely the perfect ending to a film which exploits absurdity to the same degree that today's cannibal films exploit cruelty.

Aim for a nerve center, Creasy!

EXPLOITATION RETROSPECTIVE #26-- The best issue yet (but since it's devoted to Klaus Kinski, I admit I'm prejudiced), not only in the written word but graphics too. This special Klaus Kinski issue contains 22 Kinski films reviewed, excerpts from Kinski's autobiography (which I believe should be retitled MY DICK!), a Kinski poll and a pullout Kinski Filmography. \$10/10 issues from Dan Taylor, P.O.Box 1428, Delran, NJ 08075.

MORRONS PICTURES-- The latest issue of this excellent series is devoted to Mario Bava and is my favorite issue yet! excellent visuals from BLACK SABBATH, THE EVIL EYE, BLACK SABBATH, BLOOD AND BLACK LACE, DANGER DIABOLIK, DAY OF BLOOD, SHOCK and much more fill out the issue in color and black and white. Gerard Noel and Luogo Balbo should be congratulated. Order from Fantaco Enterprises here in the states.

SPROCKETS FALL '89-- The annual issue of SPROCKETS has been published by Martin Klug and as usual it's an excellent informative issue. Compact in size, it contains 75 pages of material covering Deborah Foreman, 30 film reviews, book reviews, a personal essay by Dave Saurk (ENOUGH OF THIS RAVELING SHIT, DAVE!), and much more. \$4.95 from, 7735 Attingham Lane, St. Louis, MO 63119.

Next issue is going to be a bit different. 13 Years ago I saw a film called FUCKED that starred Jean Louis Trintignant, Eva Aulin and Gina Lollobrigida. It honestly warped my cinematic perceptions so much that my mutation to an Euro-Trash Fanatic can be traced back to this event. I recently made a trip to Miami, FL in search of Vehement Videos (See the first issue of Tim Lucas' VIDEO MATCH DOG magazine for more details of my trip-hint, Hint!), and sure enough uncovered this gem, under the title DEATH RAID AN EGG. Next issue will be a forum on this film with comments by Conrad Widenor, Cecil Doyle, Tom Neisser, Michael Recula, Stephen Bissette, Tim Lucas, Jeff Smith and others. It should be illuminating. Adios.

